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A Pathetic Plea

In his New York effort to correct the mistake he made at Chicago while indiscriminately attacking newspaper men, Mr. Taft made a pathetic plea. He told of some of the vexations of the presidential office, how they drove the occupant nearly to distraction. He said he had been criticised for doing so much traveling but explained that it was a great relief at times to flee from the criticisms at the national capital, board a special car and hurry away to visit among the people, many of whom had never seen a president and most of whom were willing to accord him courteous reception in spite of his mistakes. There was no mistaking the president's deep feeling. Plainly he was worried.

Some of the plain people, who accorded Mr. Taft enthusiastic reception in spite of his mistakes, could tell him how to rise above the troubles now surrounding him. They could tell him in the first place that he should have chosen at least one member of his cabinet who was out of sympathy with the trust system, who believed in popular government and who could advise him that the way to all the peace which a useful, active man may have these days, is through devoted service to the public interests and relentless antagonism to the forces that would prey upon the public welfare.

Why does Mr. Taft fail to adopt this course? The answer is he was elected by the very forces which he ought now be antagonizing. The trusts provided the republican committee with its campaign funds and Mr. Taft received the united support of the special interests. Newspaper dispatches reported that his brother, a multi-millionaire, had assured Wall Street that the republican candidate would be "safe and sane," and John D. Rockefeller himself gave out a newspaper interview assuring the business world that they could depend upon the republican nominee. As soon as he was elected, Mr. Taft surrounded himself with cabinet advisors who had received their training in the circles where trust magnates most do congregate. Then when the republican party revised the tariff upward in spite of an implied pledge to revise it downward, he declared the result to be "the best tariff law ever placed upon the statute books." Surrounded as he was by Wickershams and Ballingers he recommended the sort of legislation for which the special interests are most anxious. From ship subsidy to national incorporation, he has shaped his recommendations to suit the purpose of the system to which the republican party owes its repeated successes and to which the American republic owes its present day deplorable condition.

No American citizen likes to see the president of this republic in an unhappy frame of mind. Every patriot would have the president as free from care as is possible. Everyone would have him complete his administration with credit to himself and honor to the people. Would you learn, Mr. President, of the paths of peace?

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Then cut loose from Aldrich and Cannon. Turn your back upon Aldrichism and Cannonism. Hold out the hand of welcome to LaFollette and to the faithful democrats who, co-operating with LaFollette in the senate and with insurgent republicans in the house, are ever ready to co-operate with the president once he sets his face toward the rising sun and takes his stand for the people rather than for their oppressors. Abandon your efforts to force national incorporation upon the people. Drop the central bank scheme, the ship subsidy scheme, the centralized railroad regulation scheme. Call upon congress to give to the people tariff revision that will be in keeping with the pledge your party made and which you repeatedly interpreted prior to election day. Make your administration representative of the integrity and the democracy of the American people.

Regrettable as it is you have great cause for worry, Mr. President. Your administration is, admittedly, more servile to the special interests than any other administration in American history. In the opinion of many calm, thoughtful men your administration has brought a crisis upon this great government of ours; it has placed popular government in peril and republicans, as well as democrats, in the east as well as in the west and south, are asking, with respect to the American republic, "What shall we do to save it?"

CHAMP CLARK ET AL

It must not be forgotten that Champ Clark and his democratic associates in the house are entitled to hearty congratulation for the good fight they made in the Cannon controversy. Mr. Clark and his followers waged their fight skillfully. They played the highest sort of politics in joining with the members of another party in the hope of giving good results to the public interests. Democrats everywhere were glad to know that their representatives in congress presented a united front to the enemy. Commoner readers in every congressional district ought to send a note of thanks to their congressmen. They are accustomed to criticism, let them have some kind words at the moment when it will do them good and when it will do the party and the country good, too; for words of encouragement are very helpful to the honest public servant.

POOR EXCUSE

Some of the republican insurgents who joined in the vote of confidence to Speaker Cannon seek to justify their conduct by the statement that they could not be expected to join with their democratic allies in assuming the responsibility for legislation. The Chicago Record-Herald, a republican paper, makes complete answer to this absurd excuse. The Record-Herald says: "What pending legislation that is really progressive and popular are the democrats fighting? When and where has the party line been drawn in recent years to the injury of the people? Did not the democrats support the Roosevelt measures when they were being pushed through congress? Did they vote against the railroad bill, the pure food bill, the income tax amendment? Are they not prepared to vote for conservation, for additional commerce regulation, for tariff revision downward?"

WHAT WILL HE DO?

Constantinople cablegrams say that Oscar Straus, United States ambassador to Turkey, has been summoned to meet Mr. Roosevelt at Cairo, Egypt. Mr. Straus is a warm personal friend of Mr. Taft, and the fact that he has gone to meet the former president is presented by the Taft men as an offset to the report that Mr. Pinchot was invited to confer with Mr. Roosevelt.

Prophets are without honor and those who are inclined to assume that role in this particular case will do well to remember that Mr. Roosevelt's practice has not always been entirely in accordance with his preaching. Mr. Roosevelt might conclude that the effort to bolster up the Taft administration would be as exciting as a South African monkey hunt.

Principles and Men

Defending the failure of republican insurgents to aid in ousting Mr. Cannon from the speaker's chair, the Lincoln, Neb., Journal, republican, says:

"The degree in which men separate principles from persons is one of the best of all tests of their civilization. Only savages massacre a defeated army. It is a tenet of our religion to hate the sin but love the sinner. One of the most inspiring sights ever presented by the American congress is the calmness following last week's storm, the capacity those men show to differ radically in view and interest and yet associate in calm good temper, and ne'er present their injuries to their heart, to bring it into danger."

It is all very well to separate principles from persons but if we are to bring about the establishment of a particular principle in public affairs we do not give the administration of those affairs into the hands of men violently opposed to that principle. The Journal draws a beautiful picture of the capacity of the Cannonites and anti-Cannonites in the republican party "to differ radically in view and interest and yet associate in calm, good temper." That notion is not borne out by the attitude of Mr. Cannon and his followers or, for instance, by the speaker's address before the Illinois association. When it came to the nomination of a new rules committee the Cannon men saw the importance of having men to represent principles and so they saw to it that not an insurgent was nominated for that committee; on the other hand they put none but stalwart Cannon men on guard.

The American people can not fight the great trust system with confetti. Real representatives of the people fight this system under great disadvantages and they must make every blow count. This does not mean that any element of personal hatred shall enter the battle. One may look tenderly upon the good personal qualities of the speaker, his marked ability, the great endurance he displays for one of his age, his genial, personal characteristics and yet, remembering that, with all his virtues, he is the representative of the trust system that is oppressing the American people, move upon him without mercy and drive him from political power.

NOMINATING SENATORS

Governor Marshall of Indiana has endorsed the proposition made by democrats generally that the democratic state convention for Indiana nominate a candidate for United States senator.

In the absence of a law making it possible for the people to vote directly for senatorial candidates, the nomination plan is good. The people of Indiana are deeply concerned in the character of the man who will succeed Mr. Beveridge in the senate. They have the right to know the identity of the man whom the democratic legislature will elect to the senate in advance, if possible, of the election of the legislature. If every democratic aspirant for senatorial honors in Indiana shall submit his claims to the democratic state convention it is safe to say that those claims will be given due consideration; and it is also safe to say that the chances for securing a senator of superior character would be far better if the candidate were chosen in advance by the state convention than if the office were permitted to become the football of politics in a legislative contest.

This applies to other states where the Oregon law is not in force.

In an editorial entitled "The Democrats and the Senatorship," the Indianapolis News, an independent republican newspaper that often supports democratic candidates, says:

"Much opposition exists to the choice of a senatorial candidate by the democratic state convention. But if the democrats could only imagine themselves in the midst of the campaign they would perhaps see the wisdom of